

## **SWIM: Regional Collaborative Library Education Project**

### **Overview**

Four states—South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana—have formed a formal partnership called SWIM to address library education needs in the region. The SWIM Regional Collaborative Library Education Project will provide scholarships to educate 50 librarians and school library media specialists to work in the region's rural communities and is funded through a grant from the [Institute of Museum and Library Services \(IMLS\) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program](#).

The three-year project officially began July 1, 2009. The first steps were to form a 12-member Advisory Council to oversee the project and to start promoting the project in the four-state region. Beginning in Fall 2009, applications will be available for residents to apply for scholarships. Thirty scholarships (6 per state, 6 at-large) will be awarded in spring 2010 for residents in the SWIM region to attend the University of North Texas's distance MLIS program. Twenty scholarships (4 per state, 4 at-large) will be awarded for residents to attend online School Library Media Endorsement programs (Montana residents will attend either the University of Montana or Montana State University programs). Scholarship awards will be made in Spring 2010 and recipients will begin coursework in Fall 2010, receiving a substantial level of financial support.

### **Vision**

To provide improved library services for residents in the SWIM region by graduating students with strong technology skills, new solutions to information challenges, and a commitment to a 21<sup>st</sup> century career in librarianship.

### **Goals**

1. increase the number of MLIS librarians
2. increase the number of endorsed school librarians
3. recruit Native Americans and Hispanics to the library profession
4. encourage professional development and collaboration among librarians

### **Awards to Scholarship Recipients**

- Financial support (approximately 80% of projected tuition and fees)
- Travel stipends for required trainings, residencies, and conferences in the SWIM area
- Opportunity to earn an ALA-accredited MLIS degree or a School Library Media Endorsement

### **Project Timeline**

- Scholarship promotion and application period: Fall 2009 to Spring 2010
- Scholarships awarded: Spring 2010
- Study program: August 2010 to August 2012
- MLIS required residencies and Endorsement virtual meetings: September 2010 and January 2011
- Library Association conferences: 2010
- Graduation: August 2012
- Two-year employment in professional library position: following graduation

### **SWIM Scholarship Qualifications and Requirements**

- Bachelor's degree in any subject area for MLIS; teaching degree for School Library Media Endorsement
- Have not previously been enrolled in or completed MLIS or Endorsement coursework
- Be willing to commit to a 21<sup>st</sup> century career in librarianship
- Acceptance at University of North Texas for [MLIS](#) program
- Acceptance at the [University of Montana](#) or [Montana State University](#) [LINK to \(http://www.montana.edu/libmedia/index.html\)](http://www.montana.edu/libmedia/index.html) for Endorsement program

- Have adequate computer equipment and Internet access available for online coursework
- Participate in online discussion boards
- Attend UNT-required four-day institutes in September 2010 and January 2011 for the MLIS cohort held in the SWIM region
- Attend virtual meetings during the first and second semesters to collaborate with other students in the Endorsement cohort
- Become a member of the state library association and attend the 2011 annual conference
- Following graduation, secure a full-time professional library position for a minimum of two years in any academic, public, school or special library located in one of the SWIM states
- Stay involved and active with individual's state library association
- Serve as an ambassador for the profession, sharing expertise with colleagues and mentoring future librarians to enter the career and make a difference

### **MLIS Program Description**

Students will enroll in the University of North Texas blended learning program, a 36 credit-hour program combining:

- distance learning (on-line) courses delivered via the Web (at least two courses per semester for six academic semesters)
- intensive in-person, four-day institutes (one in September 2010 and one in January 2011) held in the SWIM region

### **School Library Media Endorsement Program Description (for Montana residents)**

The online endorsement program available at the [University of Montana](#) is accepted in all four SWIM states and requires the following:

- 27 credit-hours online
- One 3-credit-hour course is a Library Media Practicum (90 hours of fieldwork in a school library media center)
- 10 hours of seminar online

The online endorsement program available at the [Montana State University](#) is accepted in all four SWIM states and requires the following:

- 21 credit-hours online
- One 3-credit-hour course is a Library Media Internship

### **The SWIM Website – coming in Fall 2009**

The SWIM website will provide access to professional development programs, both distance education and blended, along with scholarship information, for access by individuals interested in pursuing a career in librarianship in the future. The website will be available in late fall 2009.

### **SWIM Project Team Members**

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### **UNT MLIS Contacts**

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**Montana Endorsement Contacts**

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**The SWIM Advisory Council**

The 12-member SWIM Advisory Council will be comprised of the representatives listed below, with three members representing each state:

- Representative from each state library association
- State librarian or appointee from each state library or commission
- Academic librarian – Montana representative
- Tribal college librarian – South Dakota representative
- Public librarian – Wyoming representative
- School librarian -- Idaho representative